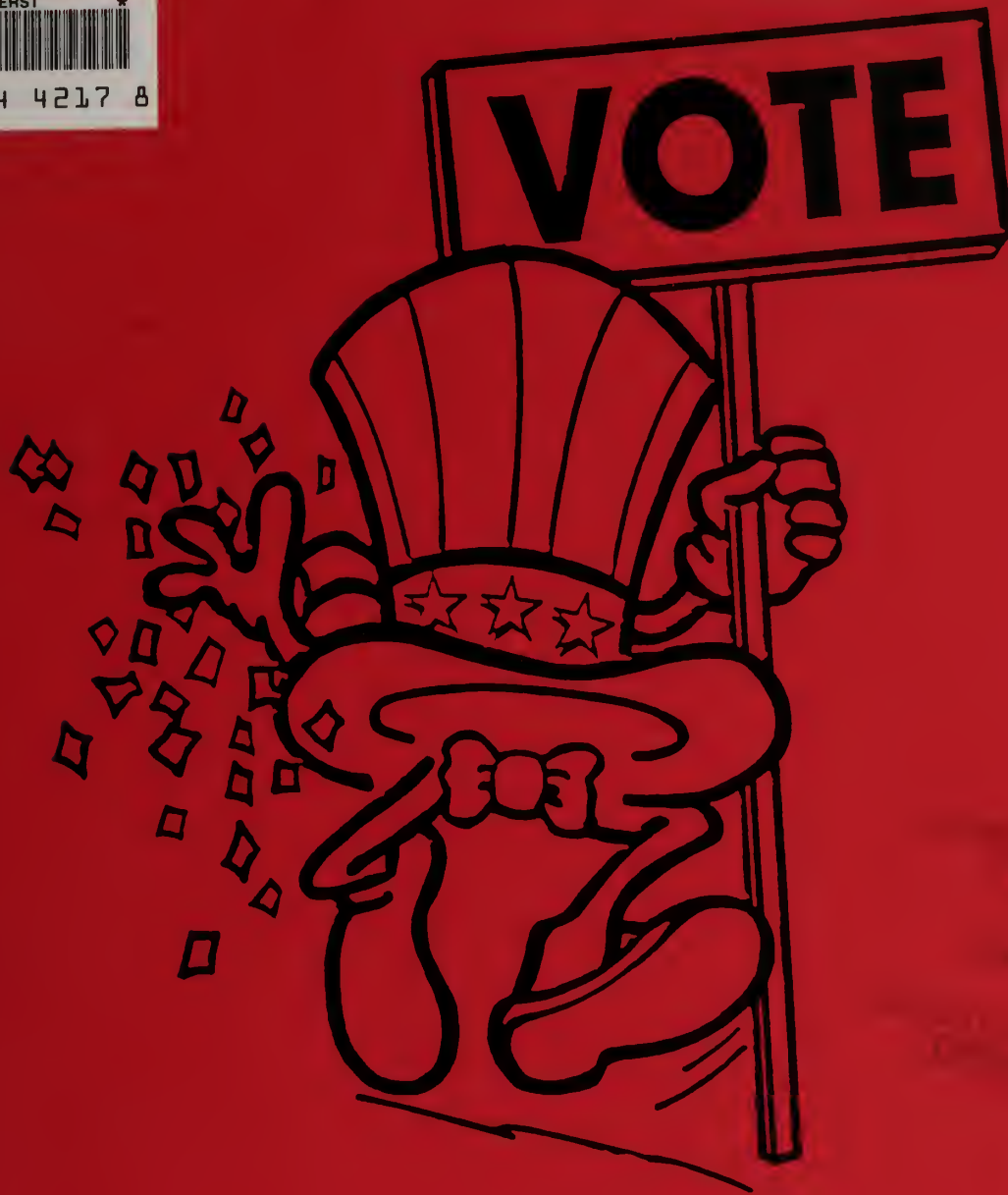
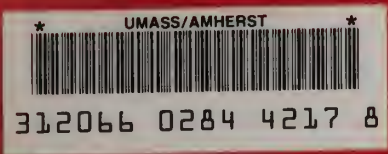


MISS. Y3, VPP1: V94



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!  
*Register and Vote*



Voter Registration Partnership  
One Ashburton Place  
Room 1705  
Boston, MA 02108  
1-800-462-VOTE  
(617)-727-2828



# Introduction

The Voter Registration Partnership is a non-partisan, non-profit corporation composed of many diverse organizations working together to increase voter registration and participation across the state. The Partnership is chaired by Secretary of State Michael J. Connolly, and was originally formed in 1987 because of the low voter participation rates throughout the Commonwealth.

Unfortunately, the voter registration laws in Massachusetts make it fairly difficult to register to vote. You must personally appear before a registrar of voters at a city or town hall at least 28 days before a state election in order to register to vote. If you move to a new city or town, you must register again. Most people are unaware of these requirements. The Partnership believes that the best way to increase voter registration is to educate the public on how, where, and when to register. Therefore, our primary goal is to distribute this information to as wide an audience as possible.

The state election of 1990 is going to be a very exciting and important election year. We will be choosing a new governor, and potentially voting on 9 statewide questions. It is crucial for people to understand how to become involved in the process. Please help us promote voter registration by joining the Partnership. Together, we can make a difference!



# History

Coalitions, organizations, partnerships: the words ring with the promise of harmony and consensus, with visions of strength and purpose beyond the capabilities of the individual...and rightly so. However, many valiant attempts at organizing a disparate group of people into a single, goal-oriented organization have been made and met with the conflicts presented by competing agenda.

As individuals and organizations, the members of the Voter Registration Partnership represent a broad variety of views as to how, when, where and by whom voter registration should be conducted. Yet, when we act together as the Partnership we have been able to cooperate effectively in a series of efforts that have resulted in a record number of registered voters in Massachusetts: 3,274,777.

The Voter Registration Partnership is a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose primary goal has been to register eligible persons to vote while focusing on those groups of individuals hardest to reach and motivate. It was originally called together on March 19, 1987 by Michael J. Connolly, Secretary of State. From that initial meeting we grew and coalesced.

In the summer of 1987, the Partnership developed and implemented a pilot project to test its planned public information campaign for 1988. Five communities were targeted: New Bedford, Worcester, Springfield, Gardner, and two wards in Boston. The plan was to support the formation of a local partnership that included local election officials and community activists and to invite the media to participate as a partner rather than a spectator. The findings from the pilot project were:

- \* The Voter Registration Partnership was able to bring together local election officials and community activists.
- \* Local community activists and election officials have the opportunity to cooperate whether or not they agree on a registration philosophy.
- \* A lack of knowledge about how, when and where to register was ascribed to the general public at meetings in every community.
- \* The Partnership can facilitate communications.
- \* The Partnership can offer important support to local registration programs.
- \* The press should be encouraged to join the Partnership.
- \* There is no single solution to the decrease in voter participation.

Final assessment of the pilot project indicated that efforts by local registration officials augmented by community volunteers, supported by the Voter Registration Partnership and enhanced by media coverage can increase registration. The pilot project, which successfully registered hundreds of new voters and helped reverse a ten year decline in registration in the five targeted cities, encouraged the Partnership to plan a state-wide public information campaign for the three 1988 state elections: the presidential primary in March, the state primary in September and the state election in November.

The Partnership has no office nor full time staff. It has been supported primarily by staff in the office of the Secretary of State and the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts and a \$10,000 grant from a private foundation which ran out with the 1988 election. The Lotte E. Scharfman Education Fund served as the supervising organization for the disbursement of funds.

# 1988 Campaign

The Partnership's goal was to persuade eligible citizens to register to vote by conducting a public information campaign that included as many advertising and media outlets as possible. The campaign focused on the date of the close of registration (almost a month before the election) and the date of the election. All expenditures of funds were recommended by a sub-committee and decided by the Partnership at its regular monthly meetings. The following is a summary of the Partnership's activities in 1988.

## *Public Service Announcements*

Tapes and written scripts for public service announcements (PSAs) of 30 to 60 seconds in simple straightforward language encouraging people to register and vote were sent to radio stations across the state.

## *Newspaper Advertisements*

Newspaper advertisements were purchased in papers serving target groups, particularly foreign language and neighborhood papers. The ads were aimed at persuading community leaders to encourage community participation in registering to vote and going to the polls.

## *Public Service Messages*

Public service messages were prepared and sent to newspapers and the Partnership successfully generated newspaper editorials and articles that specifically announced the voter registration deadlines.

## *Billboards*

Ackerley Communications, Inc. contributed space on fifteen billboards in Boston and Worcester. The Partnership paid reduced rates for printing and installing the signs.

## *Transit System Posters*

Free interior advertising space was donated by twelve transit companies throughout the state for the February presidential primary and for the September state primary. The signs reached several hundred thousand commuters across the state in key cities and towns. Project funds were used to print the 1500 signs.

## *Brochures*

Brochures were distributed to the Massachusetts business community describing the project and asking for business participation both by encouraging employees to register to vote and by making donations and in-kind contributions such as messages on milk cartons, grocery bags, company newsletters, etc.

## *Message Statements*

Boston Edison and Commonwealth Energy included voter registration information enclosures with customer bills; Bank of Boston printed information on all Visa and Mastercard bills and on all bank statements to customers.

## *Voter Registration Events*

The following companies agreed to hold voter registration events at their facilities. This involves filing a petition and coordinating the event with the board of registrars in the city or town where the company is located:

- Bay State Gas Co.
- First Berry Festival
- Friendly Restaurants
- General Electric Plastics
- Massachusetts Mutual Insurance Co.
- Merillat Industries
- Milton Bradley
- Raytheon
- Tambrands, Inc.
- Taste of Springfield
- Teradyne
- Westvaco Corp.

## *State Involvement*

The Governor asked agency heads to send out a letter to their regional offices requesting that local registrars be authorized to use state offices for voter registration. This letter was dated May 19, 1988 and was signed by the directors of Public Welfare, Social Services, Registry of Motor Vehicles, and Employment Security. A follow-up letter was sent to the local registrars in each of the communities where regional offices are located, indicating that space was to be made available for voter registration, and supplying the name of a contact person in that office.

# Accomplishments

One of the main accomplishments of the Voter Registration Partnership was the unique composition of the Partnership itself. As a bi-partisan organization, it was comprised of many diversified interest groups that worked together for a common purpose.

With the help of public service announcements, billboards and posters, our organization successfully increased public awareness of voter registration.

On a more tangible note, the Partnership is proud to report that there were 3,274,777 people registered to vote in Massachusetts before the 1988 election, a record number even for a presidential election year!

Since the Partnership only had \$10,000 with which to work, we prudently devised a budget designed to distribute information to as many people as possible for the least possible cost. For example, when Bank of Boston joined the Partnership, they agreed to place a voter registration message on their Mastercard/Visa statements with our telephone number. This reached hundreds of thousands of voters, at no cost to the Partnership.

We also sponsored an art contest for our 1990 "register and vote" logo. This picture will appear on our "Information for Voters" pamphlet which is sent to every household in the Commonwealth. Therefore, we get a free logo/drawing for all of our election materials and in exchange, the artist receives statewide recognition. It is this type of creativity and ingenuity which has made the Partnership a huge success.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2015

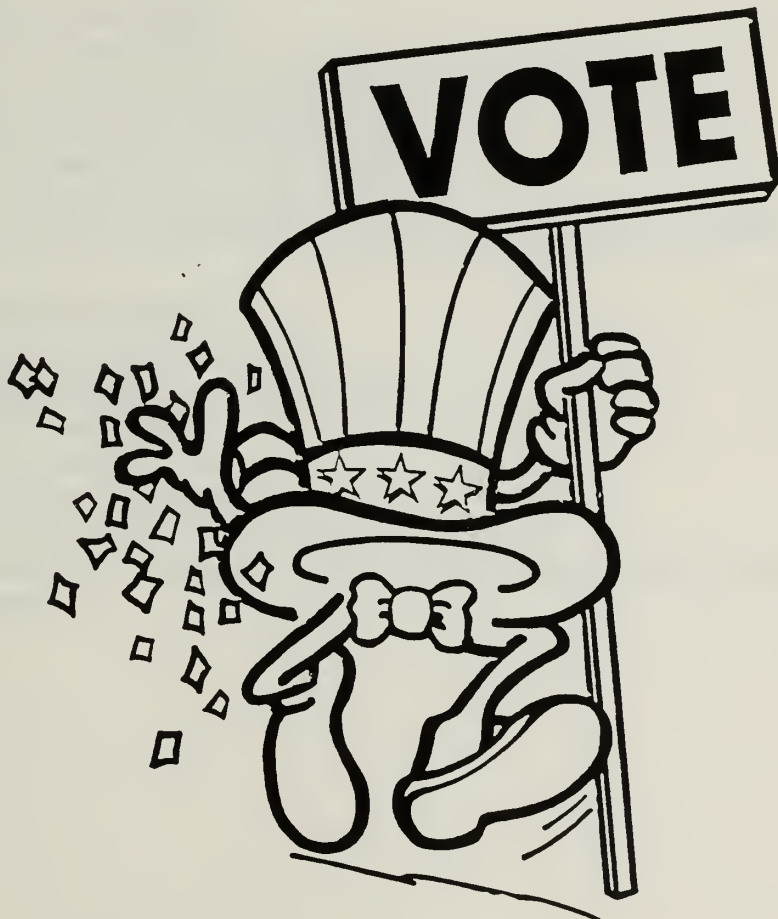
<https://archive.org/details/youcanmakediffer00vote>

# 1990 Voter Registration Campaign

As previously discussed, 1990 is going to be a busy election year. We will be electing a United States senator, congressman, governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer, auditor, along with state and county officers. There will also be many potential ballot questions concerning state finances which are of great concern to all citizens of the Commonwealth. Therefore, it is extremely important for everyone to know how, when, and where to register to vote.

## *Art Contest*

Secretary Connolly sponsored an art contest last February, and selected a winner in May, 1989. The purpose of the contest was to select an original piece of artwork to appear on all 1990 election information. The Secretary wanted to move away from the typical images associated with elections (flags, stars and stripes, etc). If posters and brochures appear less bureaucratic, the Secretary believes that more people will take the time to read the brochure and learn about the electoral process. The Secretary therefore selected the entry below as the contest winner, submitted by Ruth Myers Laider. The Partnership will be using this character on all 1990 posters and billboards.



## *Bookmarks*

We have just produced voter registration bookmarks which were sent to all bookstores in the area. They will also be sent to libraries and legal aid offices. We are hoping to use these extensively throughout the election season because they are cheap to produce, easy to read and understand, and easy to pack, display, and distribute as well.

## *New Voter Registration Law Recently Enacted*

Chapter 567 of the Acts of 1989, "An Act Relative To Voter Registration", allows people to register to vote in any city or town of the Commonwealth, at the office of the board of registrars, or election commission. Before this law was enacted, people could only register in the city or town where they lived. This was very inconvenient for working men and women. The Partnership is very pleased with this progressive law, and we believe that it will truly facilitate voter registration. We would like to publicize it as much as possible during the coming year.

# How YOU Can Help

## *At your Workplace*

- \* Coordinate voter registration event in cafeteria
- \* Conduct poster contest
- \* Insert flyers in pay envelopes
- \* Write articles in employee newsletters
- \* Display Partnership posters in common areas
- \* Sponsor competition (e.g., essay contest on the importance of registering to vote.) The prize might be an extra paid holiday on election day.
- \* Provide release time for registration and voting.
- \* Insert reminder notices in customer billing.

## *In your community*

- \* Provide transportation to and from town hall for registration
- \* Provide transportation to and from the polls
- \* Provide community day care services on primary and election days
- \* Mount signs/posters on company vehicles driving through community

## *Direct grants and gifts*

Make a direct grant or gift to the Partnership to help support:

- \* Production of TV Public Service Announcements (PSA's)
- \* Production, distribution of radio spots
- \* Fabrication of banners for public events
- \* Postage and handling costs for direct mail
- \* Purchase of space in newspapers for ads (if no PSA space available)

## *In-kind contributions*

- \* Printing posters, flyers, stationery
- \* Space in professional or trade publications
- \* Telephones for outreach
- \* Space for registration events
- \* Labor for outreach in community
- \* Space in the print media for ads, articles, features.
- \* Incentive items for registration events - for example, samples or imprinted pens, buttons, balloons



## *Tie-in advertising*

- \* Imprint message on point-of-purchase packaging, grocery bags, delivery boxes, in-store displays
- \* Imprint message on direct mail envelopes to customers or sales prospects
- \* Tie-in events or co-promotions
- \* Run and advertise special primary or election day sales
- \* Buy advertising space for campaign on MBTA, billboards or print ads; credit contribution with tag line (A Public Service Message from ... )
- \* Ask any media from whom you have purchased time or space to promote campaign

## **But most importantly ... remember these dates!**

August 21, 1990 - Last day to register for state primary

September 18, 1990 - State Primary

---

October 9, 1990 - Last day to register for State Election

November 6, 1990 - State Election





